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Memorandum of Conversation

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DATE: June 16, 1961

SUBJECT: Comments of Mr. Laloy at Tripartite Luncheon

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Foy D. Kohler, Assistant Secretary, EUR

(See last page for other participants)

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After an opening welcome from Mr. Kohler, in referring to Khrushchev's speech said that perhaps the draft of the reply to the Soviet Aide Memoire should take some cognizance of the speech. He said it was his impression that when it came to the real problem of Berlin, war and so forth that Khrushchev took a more cautious, calculated line in the speech than he did in the Aide Memoire. He referred to his use of rather vague phraseology such as a "European settlement before the end of the year", "we will defend our independence" and any crossing of borders will bring "a proper rebuff". Mr. Kohler said in other words the President may have had more effect on Khrushchev than was thought at the time. agreed.

After listening to Mr. Kohler's presentation of the U.S. proposals, speaking personally, said that he agreed with the general line taken by Mr. Kohler and that he found his a very interesting exposé. He said he subscribed completely to our thinking on bringing Mr. Khrushchev to reflect on this matter. He added, however, that without reference to French attitude towards the U.N., he had reservations about the first course of action because of the role which some representative of an uncommitted country might assume. For example, he feared that one of the neutrals would say that the four do not know what to do about Berlin and therefore they must produce the solution. He had in mind public figures such as Nkrumah and Houphouet-Boigny. He said as a result of this activity we might find ourselves, for example, forced to recognize the GDR. He also queried as to whether the ICI could come up with a decision.

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E.O. 11652, SEC. 3(E), 5(D), 5(E) AND 11

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He stated that we must make Khrushchev understand that we are serious. However, we also must not lead our people to believe that we are not willing to talk. In addition, we must cope with the uncommitted world. His conclusion was that we must try to maintain an open line of contact with Khrushchev without giving him the idea that we are anxious to talk with him. In other words, we are prepared for normal negotiations without having discussions under threat of course. He added that he realized that this must be elaborated upon.

On the second aspect of the plan he said he was in entire agreement. He added in conclusion that he was of the view that this type of activity would produce the proper atmosphere for negotiation. At the end of his comment he reiterated that he was still concerned that resort to the U.N. might be fraught with more danger than advantages.

Mr. Kohler interrupted at this point to say that the approach to the U.N. was based on assumption that some do-gooder would take the matter to the U.N. anyhow and that the West might just as well take the initiative in this matter and control it. In a later clarification of his point of view, [redacted] said that he was not so unhappy about resort to the ICJ but rather to the Security Council and General Assembly. Mr. Kohler explained that the only reason for resort to the Security Council and the General Assembly was that through these organs one would be able to ask for an advisory opinion of the ICJ. He indicated that the case would probably never come before the ICJ.

Participants:

U.S.

Mr. Richard H. Davis
Mr. Paul Nitze
Mr. Milton C. Rehwinkel
Mr. Henry Owen
Mr. Martin Hillenbrand
Mr. William L. Blue
Professor Henry Kissinger